

## Helping

Living in a family of seven is not always easy-- with three sisters and one brother, things always seem a bit more chaotic compared to other families. No matter what order we were born in, everyone claims theirs was the worst: the oldest had to set rules and regulations, always the genie pig. The second was always right behind the first-- except their privileges were shortened due to the oldest mistakes. The middle child, which is me, was always the one left out, forgotten, or so I thought. The youngest children were the products of pure torture-- they only got the leftovers.

Of course we were all different in our own ways. Some of us were more laidback; the others were more uptight and serious. We all had our problems too, whether it was academic subjects or just school in general. English was always the stronger subject for me, whether it was explicating poetry or finding the metaphors in novels. Megan, the second youngest, was the total opposite. Because of the fact that she rarely took time to study her vocabulary words or memorize poetry assigned, her grade often showed it. I had always been giving her advice year after year: study harder, make flashcards, go see a tutor; however, nothing ever seemed to work. My advice was simply not good enough. It was not until my senior year I finally took on a different strategy to help my pathetic, younger sister.

Thinking the course Culture Shock: Greek Mythology was a laid back class, Megan and I both signed up for it. When my senior and her sophomore year started we were both surprised by the course we judged way too quickly. Culture Shock by any means was not laidback or a breeze. For once, we both struggled keeping up with the assignments and doing well on the chapter tests. Being completely different, Megan and I found something in common that year: we both despised Culture Shock more than anything.

Towards the end of the year when it came time to read the play *Medea* we were not prepared for what was to come after-- an assignment that had us pick partners and learn 25 lines each of the play, and present it on stage in front of our peers. After realizing complaining would get us no where-- we cracked down and started to memorize-- being that we chose each other as partners. I was a rather quick with memorizing, but Megan took more time. I knew of Megan's struggle but figured she would listen to my advice: study harder, learn a couple lines at a time. Seeming that we had a week to do this, it would give her plenty enough time to follow my well thought out advice.

After a week of memorizing my lines I called Megan into the living room to practice: it was the day before our presentation. When we sat down on the couch facing each other with our lines held in front of us, she looked as though she would have mental breakdown. It hit me all together-- it was the day before our presentation and she was not ready, at all. Starting to panic, I went bezerk on Megan. I called her irresponsible and inconsiderate, it was not just her grade but mine also. When her eyes filled with tears I realized then the same applied to me: it wasn't just my grade it was hers too, I should have given her more than just advice. I knew she had trouble with memorizing yet I never took time to teach her any strategies or sit down and physically help her. Even though I knew it was too late, we were presenting tomorrow, I had to help Megan one way or the other.

We started from line one, said the words over and over until her mouth became dry and she needed to move on to the second. For hours we sat on our green couch, repeating *Medea* lines until I could no longer stand it. We had ups and downs along the way. She would be in tears, defeated by the lines of the play, the words sounding wrong on her lips. My frustration

kept building up-- eventually leading me to explode more than once, but finally, the night same to an end. There was nothing left to do except repeat the lines in our sleep.

Megan was not one-hundred percent confident about the play, and neither was about her, but it was better than what she started off with. Walking into third period, I was so nervous. Not just because my grade would be jeopardized-- but because of my sister's too-- I wanted so desperately for her to do good enough, for her to realize some things just take time and care. On top of being nervous, we were called up first. With shaking hands, we approached the stage, put on our masks and began to recite the lines. After my first ten lines were done, I held my breath and prayed for Megan's voice to be smooth, to not butcher the words or mispronounce any of the lines we stayed yep all night to memorize.

There was not a hint of nerves in her voice, but looking down at her hands clenched fists, I new her heart was racing. Her words were like honey, pronouncing them better than my own lines. She did not stumble once as we slowly went though the play, talking back and forth as if we had studied the lines for months. When it was all over everybody clapped, while Megan looked over at me and let out a sigh of relief. I leaned over and told her what a great job she did. Ignoring my words, all she said was thank you.